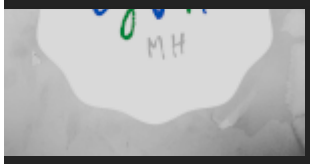

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Your guide to Chrome OS and its Apps

Advanced Android Beginner Chrome OS Guide Linux Professional Switching from Windows

Chrome OS: What about portable applications like on Windows? [E]

August 19, 2020 Ravolos aka Marcel 0 Comments AppImage, Launcher, LiberKey, Portable Applications, PortableApps 14 min read

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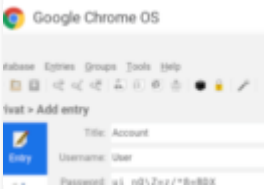
Introduction

On *Windows*, for example, it is possible to use *portable applications* very comfortably without *installation* with the help of

Popular Recent Comment



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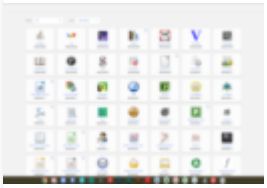


Activating the Linux Mode of Chrome OS [E]

June 1, 2020 0 7 min read

Windows Store?

You can copy portable applications to a *USB stick* or an *external SSD*. This way, you always have your favorite tools with you and can, for example, go to a relative to help them with a problem. Even as a pupil or student, you can use everything you need in the computer center of your school or university without installation.

Another example: When I got a new *Windows* device, I copied my 150 or so *applications* to the *internal data storage,* and everything I needed was right at the start. In other words: There are many areas of use!

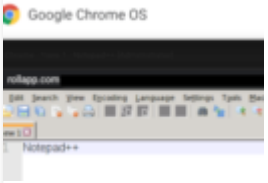
LiberKey on *Windows* | Image: *cyldx.com*

So far, so good! But what about *portable applications* on *Chrome OS*?

There are alternatives for every scenario, like *Chrome OS*, *Android,* and *Linux* mode, which I present to you now!

Important Notes

ng a Graphical App Store Part 1 [A]
June 3, 2020 0 8 min read


Chrome OS: What about Notepad++ (SciTE)? [A]
June 23, 2020 0 6 min read

Here is the meaning of the abbreviations after the headings: [E] Everyone [A] Advanced [B] Beginner [P] Professional

If you still miss something, feel free to comment. The community will try to help you! 🙂

Notes for professionals: My posts usually have the form of a knowledge base entry and should be equally suitable for beginners, advanced users, and professionals. Just pick out what you need immediately. You can also find content specifically targeted to professionals. These are marked accordingly with [P] and other finger points.

Do you want to have more professional content on a topic? Add it to the comments 😉

Disclaimer of liability: As always on this blog, I warn you that all changes to your system mentioned in this post are at your own risk! It is theoretically possible that there are system or application errors that could lead to data loss and further problems!

Scenario: Portable applications for Chrome OS [B]

There are no *portable applications* comparable to *PortableApps* or *LiberKey* for the raw *Chrome OS*. With a few exceptions, such as the *Files app*, *Google* has designed it for *onli*ne use.

If you are allowed to *log in* to another *Chrome OS device* with a *Google account*, your usual *Chrome OS environment* can be set up automatically through *synchronization*. Once everything is *synchronized*, you can quickly access everything you use.

Web applications on *Chrome OS* | Image: *cyldx.com*

With your *Chrome extensions,* it is a bit different, because you need to them as an *add-on* in the *Chrome browser*. But this is also done entirely automatically by the *synchronization*. They are not shown here in the *screenshot*, because they are not callable in *incognito mode*.

You can also use your *web applications* in *Chrome OS guest mode*. In *Chrome*, login to a *Google service* such as *Gmail,* for example, and you can access your *Google apps* as usual via the *app navigation* in the *navigation bar*.

Even if the *Chrome browser's bookmarks bar* and your *Chrome extensions* are not available here, you can still access all your *web applications* or regular *websites*.

Scenario: Portable applications for Android on Chrome OS [B]

There are no *portable applications* comparable to *PortableApps* or *LiberKey* for the *Android* of *Chrome OS*, because *Android apps*

Android apps, they will be available as usual after a short wait:

The *Chrome OS synchronization* settings| Image: *cyldx.com*

That works very well! 🙂

If the device is not a family device and you need to return it, deleting your *Google Account* on the device will delete all *apps* and everything else on the device once you initiate this. That is *portable* in the broadest sense. It's similar to *unplugging* a *USB flash drive* that has your *portable apps* on it, except that *Google* has made the *apps* on the other *device* available to you.

However, if you are not allowed to *log on* to the *Chrome OS device as mentioned above*, it is unfortunately not possible to use your usual *Android apps*.

Scenario: Portable applications for the Linux of Chrome OS

Overview [A]

launch them just like the other *Android* and *Linux apps*.

Unfortunately, in my research and own tests, in preparation for the creation of this post, I was not able to make these *applications executable* on a *USB stick* or *external hard drive*. That is easily possible with the standard Linux distributions.

So, in the *Linux* of *Chrome OS,* these *applications* can apparently only be *executed* from the *internal storage* at the moment, and this is quite simple to do!

The preparations [A]

First of all, you need to activate the *Linux* of *Chrome OS*, if you haven't already done so! How to do this and how to set up *Linux* I have described in this *post*: link.

If you have set up *Linux* and you want to avoid making your *applications* executable with cryptic *commands* via the *Terminal* and start them from there? Then you can do this with a *graphical file manager* like *Double Commander* with a few *clicks*. There you will have a list of your *applications* in the broadest sense, like in the *menu* of *PortableApps* on *Windows*. That works very well and is stable. More on this later!

Now I have to tell you what kind of *p*ortable applications I mean? More on that in the next section. 🙂

AppImages on the own device [A]

AppImages are *portable applications* for *Linux*. You can *download* them from the *web*, make them *executable* and then launch them quite easily. I don't want to bore you with more technical details. See the linked *Wikipedia* article for more information.

You can *download AppImages* from various *portals*. Two good examples are *AppImageHub* and *AppImageHub on Github*.

When *downloading AppImages,* you should pay attention to statements like "*suitable for Generic Linux*" or *Debian*. In rare cases, some *AppImage packages* cannot be started at all in the *Linux* of *Chrome OS*, because they have been prepared for other *Linux derivatives*.

In the last section, I already referred to my *post* about *Double Commander*, in which I already described how to make *executable* and run *AppImages*.

If you now place all your *AppImages* in one *folder*, you can search them with the *Commander:*

Calling up the search function of the *Double Commander* | Image: *cyldx.com*

If the *directory* matches, you can now search it for the name of your *AppImage*:

Using the search function of the *Double Commander* | Image: *cyldx.com*

If you *double click* on the *search result* you will get back to the *folder* overview and from there you can *double click* on the already marked *AppImage* again to start it:

The search result for *ksnip* of *Double Commande*r | Picture: *cyldx.com*

This search is, of course, only necessary if you have a huge *AppImage* collection. Of course, you can also scroll directly to your desired *application* and start it with a *double click*:

Starting an *AppImage* from within *Double Commander* | Image: *cyldx.com*

If you prefer to use the *Terminal*, you can make *AppImages executable* there as follows and then *run* them:

```
chmod a+x Program.AppImage
./Program.AppImage
```

Integrating AppImages into the launcher of Chrome OS [P]

Overview

For the standard *Linux distributions,* there is another alternative. It is the *AppImageLauncher*, with which you can integrate *AppImages* in the system. That makes it possible to start *AppImages* from the "*start menu,"* as on *Windows*. That also works with the *launcher* of *Chrome OS*!

Attention: Unfortunately, this useful tool in the *Linux* of *Chrome OS* still has a few bugs! You cannot control it via the Terminal due to error messages. The integration into the *launcher* of *Chrome OS* works by double-clicking from a *file manager* or the *Terminal* via AppImageLauncher. But removing *AppImage shortcuts* from the *launcher* would only work with a *command* in the *Terminal*.

doing! Say: if you have advanced *Linux* knowledge!

The Installation

On the manufacturer's side, there is a slightly older but basically executable version that is suitable for *Debian Buster* (the *Linux distribution* of the *Linux* of *Chrome OS*): Link. There you can find the file "*appimagelauncher_2.0.3-travis888.4f7bc8e.buster_amd64.deb*." You can *download* this *package* and *install* it on your system by *double-clicking* it.

As already mentioned, this version still has a few teething troubles on *Chrome OS*, so everything at your own risk! If you have problems with your *Linux* system after the *installation*, you can *uninstall* the *package* after a reboot in the *Terminal* with the following *command*:

```
sudo apt-get remove --purge AppImageLauncher*
```

In the *software sources,* there are additional *packages* that support the use of *AppImages*. You can install them using the *package management* of the *Gnome Software Center*.

Starting the *package management* of *Gnome Software Center* from *Chrome OS' Launcher* | Image: *cyldx.com*

If you can't find such a *package management system* on your *system*, you can find it here in my *post* about the *Gnome Software Center*: *link*.

Finding and installing *AppImage packages* using the *package manager* on *Chrome OS* | Image: cyldx.com

The previously manually *installed package* is also listed here.

The usage

Then you should restart your system once and then start the *Terminal* or another *Linux application*, so that the *AppImageLauncher* is available when you call up *AppImages* (*double click* on an *AppImage* or run it from the *Terminal*):

The first start of the *AppImageLauncher* on *Chrome OS*| Image: *cyldx.com*

Here you can now select the option "*Integrate and run*:"

Integrating an *AppImage* into the launcher of *Chrome OS* with the *AppImageLauncher* | Image: *cyldx.com*

If you prefer not to do that, you can choose "*Run once*." The *AppImage* will start immediately.

Attention: Again, there is still a problem with the *AppImagelauncher* in the *Linux* of *Chrome OS*. Because it will not ask you again afterward if you want to integrate the *AppImage*

After integration, the *AppImageLauncher* moves your *AppImage* under a different name to the *directory* you configured when you first started the *Launcher*:

An *AppImage* moved by *AppImageLauncher* | mage: *cyldx.com*

So don't be surprised if your *AppImage* is suddenly missing in the *source directory*! 😀

AppImages integrated into the launcher of Chrome OS

If you have integrated your *AppImage* into the system, the name of the *AppImage* should – as always with the *Linux* of *Chrome OS* – finally appear in the *launcher* of *Chrome OS* after a *reboot*:

Starting an *AppImage* integrated in Chrome OS' Launcher | Image: *cyldx.com*

take a look at the following *screenshot*. As a professional, you will get an idea of what the *AppImageLauncher* is doing there:

The *files* mounted by *AppImageLauncher*, including the *desktop file* for *integration* into the *Linux menu* | Image: *cyldx.com*

Since you cannot launch *AppImages* from your *USB flash drive*, you can only use them if you are allowed to copy them to the *internal storage* of the other device. Besides, you need to mark the files as executable again on the *device* before you can use them.

But since no *installation* is required, you can use your favorite *applications* directly. 😉

If you also have a *Linux* device with one of the common *Linux distributions*, you can use the *AppImages* there. That's very convenient! 🙂

Advantages with Powerwash or a new Chrome OS device [A]

As mentioned above, this works for the pure *Chrome OS* and your *Android* apps via synchronization 😉

Conclusion

Depending on the scenario (*Chrome OS*, *Android,* or *Linux* mode), there are various ways and possibilities to use your favorite *web applications* and *tools* on other *devices*. It's not the same as with *Windows*, but it basically works. 😉

What *portable applications* do you use? 🙂

Ravolos aka Marcel

⇒ Help out! 😉

Bilder: Envato Elements

← Chrome OS: What about KeePass? [E]

Gaming on Chrome OS: Path of Exile [A] →

to describe myself as a true “Google Sheep,” incredibly addicted to travel and open-minded. I've been traveling the world as a digital nomad since October 2021, creating digital content on Chrome OS, travel, and mobile work.

Ravolos aka Marcel has 29 posts and counting.

See all posts by Ravolos aka Marcel

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June 23, 2020 0

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Adobe launches Photoshop on the web beta — as well for Chromebooks!

There was suddenly the talk of Photoshop on the web (beta). 😀 Hello, Chromebooks?

😉 More about that in the post.

Using SoftMaker Office and FreeOffice as full versions on Chrome OS [A]

June 7, 2020 0

In addition to Microsoft Office, LibreOffice, and OpenOffice, there are other alternatives to office products that not everyone knows. One competitor of Microsoft Office is SoftMaker Office! As a satisfied customer, I have been using it for years on Windows, macOS, Linux, and Android, and you can also use it as a full version on Chrome OS!

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